

MAY 24, 2004

**SCHAKOWSKY: BUSH ADMINISTRATION MISSTATEMENT OF THE DAY -
IRAQ**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) issued "The Bush Administration Misstatement of the Day" on Iraq.

President Bush has publicly defended Donald Rumsfeld and the Defense Secretary's handling of the war in Iraq. On May 10th, during an appearance at the Pentagon to show support for the embattled Cabinet Secretary, President Bush said:

"You're [Rumsfeld] doing a superb job. You are a strong Secretary of Defense."
(President Bush, May 10, 2004)

However, Retired General Anthony Zinni disagrees. The former General served as commander in chief of the United States Central Command, in charge of all American troops in the Middle East from 1997-2000.

During a 60 Minutes interview that aired on May 23, 2004, Retired General Anthony Zinni, stated that he blames *".the civilian leadership of the Pentagon directly,"* for the failures in Iraq.

According to the 60 Minutes transcript, General Zinni was asked "who do you blame?...who's responsible?"

General Zinni responded, *"Well, I blame the Pentagon. I blame the civilian leadership of the Pentagon directly. Because if they were given the responsibility and if this was their war, and, by everything I understand, they promoted it and pushed it, certain elements in there, certainly, even to the point of creating their own intelligence to--to match their needs, then they should bear the responsibility. But, regardless of whose responsibility I think it is, somebody has screwed up. And at this level and at this stage, it should be evident to everybody that they've screwed up. And whose heads are rolling on this? That's what bothers me most."*

General Zinni was also asked: "Who specifically are you talking about?"

General Zinni said: "Well, it starts with--at the top. If you're the secretary of Defense and you're responsible for that, if you're responsible for that planning and that execution on the ground, if you've assumed responsibility for the other elements, non-military, non-security, political, economic, social and everything else, then you bear responsibility. Certainly those in your ranks that foisted this strategy on us that is flawed, certainly they ought to be gone and replaced."